

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
MFA FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS


IN

PAINTING

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>MEDIUM</u>	<u>SIZE</u>
" THE REFERRAL "	1993	MIXED MEDIA	

Greg Pretty *Reconnecting*
M.F.A. 1994

1. *The Disposal of Apepi* 83" x 20" oil/wax on ceconite

*"Every night when the sun-god Ra sank to his home he was assailed by a host of demons under the leadership of the archfiend Apepi. To aid the sun-god in this daily struggle, a ceremony was performed wherein a figure of Apepi, represented . . . as a serpent with many coils, was made of wax, and on it the demon's name was written in green ink."*¹

It was then tied up, cast on the ground and repeatedly trod on by the priest, spat upon, then hacked with a knife and burned. Fortunately

*" . . . The fiends of darkness . . . passed away, atleast for a time and the beneficent sun-god shone out triumphant once more."*¹

2. *The Pollen Path* 58.5" x 36.5" oil/wax on ceconite

To the Navaho, pollen is the life source. The pollen path is the path to the centre.

3. *Net of Indra* 66.5" x 24" oil/wax on ceconite

*"Schopenhauer suggests that just as your dreams are composed by an aspect of yourself of which your consciousness is unaware, so too, will you have served unknowingly as an agent, giving meaning to the lives of others . . everything links to everything else, moved by the one will in life which is the universal will in nature. It's an idea that appears in India in the Net of Indra, where at every crossing of one thread over another there is a gem reflecting all the other reflecting gems. It is as though there is a single intention behind it all which always makes some kind of sense, though none of us knows what the sense might be."*²

4. *Middle Way* 82.5" x 55" oil/wax on ceconite

Daedalus instructed his son Icarus to fly the middle way to escape the Cretan labyrinth.

5. *Ananda* 68" x 43" oil/wax on ceconite

In Sanskrit "ananda" means rapture.

6. *ntum* 83" x 14" oil/wax on ceconite

The "supernatural" in the African Bushmen society, source of the dance-trance which leads the dancer to another realm in which he experiences climbing threads in succession, until arriving

7. *Marga* 31.5" x 23" acrylic on paper

Sanskrit word for the "path" - the path back to yourself.

8. *Ariadne's Thread* 86" x 22" oil/wax on ceconite

9. *Yellow Emperor* 31.5" x 24.5" acrylic on paper

¹ J. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art*

² Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth*

10. Arjuna 68.5" x 43.5" oil/wax on ceconite

From the Bhagavad Gita, "arjuna" refers to that which is the center, the Self, the heart of every creature.

11. Enchanted Ground 87" x 52.5" oil/wax on ceconite

The destination in *Pilgrim's Progress*.

12. Nasca Rain 70" x 43" oil/wax on ceconite

The ground paintings in Nasca, Peru were likely motivated by drought

13. East is Open 31.5" x 23" acrylic on paper

The open east is the spiritual "path" of the Navaho.

14. Mount Ch'i 31" x 22" acrylic on paper

-from *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Jung describes the archetypal nature of a particular mandala:

The sign in the bottom half to the right is "Sheng, PUSHING UPWARD". "Within the earth, wood grows: The image of Pushing Upward." It also says: "One pushes upward into an empty city," and "The king offers him Mount Ch'i." So this hexagram means growth and development of the personality, like a plant pushing out of the earth there is no development unless the shadow is accepted.³

15. When the Libido Runs Rampant in the Existential Vacuum 85.5" x 23.5" oil/wax on ceconite

16. Before Tigers 69.5" x 26" oil/wax on ceconite

-from Charles Bukowski's *For Jane*:

*I kneel in the nights
before tigers
that will not let me be.*

17. Zen Monkey 31.5" x 26.5" acrylic on paper

18. The Raising of Lazarus 82" x 20.5" oil/wax on ceconite

19. Le Christ Colle' 40" x 32" acrylic on paper

*le christ colle'
sur une vitre de voiture
automobile avec la
patte qui sert a monter
la vitre
- Marcel DuChamp*

20. The Referral 79" x 39" oil/wax on ceconite

21. Night Sea Journey 71" x 23.5" oil/wax on ceconite

Jung's metaphor for the journey into the depths of the unconscious.

³ C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*

22. Calooh! Callay! 40" x 32" acrylic on paper

"O frabjous day. Calooh! Callay!"

- from Lewis Carol's nonsense poem *Jabberwocky*.

23. Thanatos 36" x 28" acrylic on paper

Theseus descends into the labyrinth - the depths of the unconscious - to slay the minotaur.

The two horns of the minotaur are called Eros (libido) and Thanatos (death-wish).

24. Ranja 84" x 21" oil/wax on ceconite

Fading ancient dialect.

As I began to write a statement to accompany this exhibit, I was aware of a stronger desire to let the pictures "speak" for themselves. I felt uneasy about explaining the images. Would it sound arrogant or pedantic? Even worse, would I erase the invitation to venture into an enigma? Afterall, I had gained great pleasure discovering the myths of diverse cultures.

I wasn't, though, in the process of alluding to particular myths. The images weren't predetermined, but proceeded "automatically". The titles fitted on afterwards.

I was more concerned with the increasing understanding that I had been disconnected from the truth. In a way I would rather be an optometrist than a painter. I'd rather help establish an image of the world as it is than try to convey it as I see it.

Greg Pretty - December, 1993

Until I stopped being objective, things made no sense to me.

Science has a double-blind way of finding what it is looking for; myth points to larger things already found.

When an artist is pointing at the moon, it is better not to examine the tip of the guy's finger.

Religion has piled a mountain of junk between the metaphor and the message, and you're supposed to crawl around in there, looking for some clue to your existence.

Greg Pretty - December 1993

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